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Dr. Ayla Gol: 'Sept. 11 rearranges alliances'
'Russian-Iranian-Armenian front was cracked by a U.S. attempt'

SAADET ORUC

The former alliances started to be moved in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, attacks on the United States, Dr. Ayla Gol of the International Relations Department of Ankara University's Faculty of Political Sciences said.

Gol said that, Washington managed to crack the Russian-Armenian-Iranian alliance getting into a closer military relationship with Yerevan.

In an interview with the Turkish Daily News, Gol, who is a young and promising academic, suggested more steps should be taken by Turkey, to follow a balanced policy on the Caucasus in the new political environment.

Turkey should leave its pro-Azerbaijani policies, and should play a more active role in the region, Ayla Gol stated.

"Armenian Defense Minister Serzh Sarkisian, signed a joint communique with the Americans on military cooperation on March 25, 2002. That was a clear crack created by Washington on the front standing against the Turkish-Azerbaijani-American front," Ayla Gol said.

Gol presented a paper to the 12th Security and Cooperation Conference held in Antalya, and was praised by her work on the Caucasus by the participants of the conference.

In the newly-emerging situation, one of the biggest problems is the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute between Yerevan and Baku, said Gol, and offers a more Turkish involvement in the solution process.

"Armenia has realized that it cannot just make politics over Russia, and understood that it should accommodate a two-sided foreign policy, taking Russia into consideration. And Turkey should play a more active role on the issue," said Gol.

Gol said that, the United States, which has been following a "Russia first!" policy on the Caucasus, started to carry out a policy, basing on its interests on the region.

She put emphasis on the need for the protection of open dialogue channels between Armenia and Turkey.

"Concerning the emphasis on the so-called genocide issue, a distinction should be made between the Armenian government and the diaspora, initially," she suggested. "Turkey should be aware of the geographical position of Armenia, its being landlocked and the need for better ties with Turkey," Gol said.

The efforts of the Turkish and Armenian businessmen were also defined to be a very important step for the development of the Turkish-Armenian relations.

Turkish-Armenian Business Development Committee (TABDC) co-chaired by Kaan Soyak and Arsen Gazarian, has been paying considerable efforts for promoting Turkish-Armenian relations.

She put emphasis on the role of the international organizations such as the GUAMM (Georgian, Ukrainian, Uzbekistani, Azerbaijani and Moldovan) and Stability Pact for the solution of the conflicts in the region.

Compromise between Washington and Moscow on the Caucasus

Dr. Ayla Gol argues that a compromise was reached between Washington and Moscow over the Caucasus.

"U.S. military deployment in Georgia was balanced with the United States support for the Russian thesis on the Chechens, that they have been terrorists. It is seen to be a clear compromise between Washington and Moscow," she continued.

Stating that Russia is in a post-super power syndrome, Ayla Gol said that, Russia should not be neglected, in politics over the Caucasus.

Who is Ayla Gol?

Dr. Ayla Gol has been a lecturer in international relations at the Faculty of Political Science at Ankara University since 1987. She was educated at the same university from where she graduated, with a Masters in international relations. She went on to the London School of Economics, and Political Science where she gained her Ph.D. degree in 2000, and also worked as a part-time teacher for two years. Dr. Gol is a specialist in the theories of international relations, nationalism and foreign policy analysis. Her particular area of expertise is in South Caucasian affairs. She has given a number of papers at various conferences in both Turkey and Britain. She is currently preparing a book project entitled 'Modernizing Turkey through Foreign Policy: Relations with Armenia and Azerbaijan.'

Ankara - Turkish Daily News